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March is Reading Month

You can help your child succeed in school and in life – and it's as easy as opening a book! Reading with your child pays dividends far beyond spending enjoyable time together, although that is a great benefit. Reading together helps children learn and develop a lifelong love of learning. In the classroom, reading well often helps students achieve in other areas like science, math and social studies.

Of course, the importance of reading doesn't end with graduation. Our new economy demands well-educated, workers able to learn and re-learn throughout their careers. In fact, the pace of the global economy requires lifelong learning. Reading is a life skill that truly lasts a lifetime.

As a child's first and most important teacher, parents have a special role in helping children learn. Educators suggest even very young children can benefit from these reading tips:

- Read to your child every day;
- Encourage your child to read to you;
- Help your child get a library card and use it often;
- Give a book as a gift for birthdays and special occasions;
- Keep books and newspapers in a prominent place in your home; and
- READ! Let your child see how much you value reading.

Beyond the classroom and the job, reading opens the door to a world of adventure, discovery and imagination. As an avid reader, that's a message I share with students in the elementary schools I visit as a guest reader this month. Help your child or grandchild open their future to a life full of wonder and opportunity – read together!

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